

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-11

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SUBJECT: UNDP COUNTRY PROGRAM

REF: STATE 112499

1. FOLLOWING ARE RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS CONTAINED PARA 1 REFTEL.

A. UNDP EFFORT IN IRAQ CONCENTRATES HEAVILY ON THE TRAINING OF TRAINERS. IT ALSO FOCUSES ITS ATTENTION ON A FEW PRIORITY SECTORS WITH MAJOR UNDERTAKINGS, RATHER THAN DIFFUSE EFFORTS ACROSS THE BOARD. THE ENTIRE PROGRAM IS WORKED OUT IN CLOSE COLLABORATION WITH GOI AND APPEARS TO US TO BE APPROPRIATE TO IRAQ'S NEEDS. IT HAS BEEN RATHER CLOSELY COORDINATED WITH OVERALL DEVELOPMENT PLANS.

B. IN VIEW OF THE ABOVE, THERE DO NOT APPEAR TO BE ANY SIGNIFICANT DEFICIENCIES IN THE PROGRAM'S PRIORITIES. AREAS NOT COVERED, I.E. OMISSIONS, ARE INTENTIONALLY LEFT OUT.

C. IRAQ IS A WEALTHY UNDERDEVELOPED COUNTRY AND THEREFORE DOES NOT RECEIVE THE MASSIVE INFLUX OF ASSISTANCE USUALLY ASSOCIATED WITH THE POOR UNDERDEVELOPED NATIONS. AT PRESENT, WE ARE NOT AWARE THAT ANY OTHER MULTILATERAL INSTITUTIONS PROVIDE ASSISTANCE TO IRAQ THAT DUPLICATE UNDP EFFORTS. ON
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THE BILATERAL SIDE, THE MAJORITY OF AID IS TRAINING OFFERED EITHER BY EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES OR WESTERN/EASTERN COMPANIES INVOLVED IN MAJOR PROJECTS, AND COMPLIMENTS RATHER THAN DUPLICATES THE UNDP'S EFFORTS. GIVEN THE NATURE OF THIS SITUATION, THE RESREP IS NOT HEAVILY INVOLVED IN COORDINATION EFFORTS.

D. THE UNDP COUNTRY PROGRAM IS THE LARGEST EXTERNAL ASSISTANCE EFFORT BEING UNDERTAKEN IN IRAQ, TOTALING APPROXIMATELY 80 MILLION DOLLARS (15 MILLION DOLLARS IPF, 65 MILLION DOLLARS FIT OR COST-SHARING) FOR THE 1977-81 PERIOD.

E. RESREP JOURY APPEARS TO BE A HIGHLY EFFECTIVE PROGRAM DIRECTOR, AND HAS MANAGED TO ESTABLISH A POSITION FOR HIMSELF OF SOME IMPORTANCE IN WORKING OUT THE PROGRAM WITH THE GOI. JOURY HAS ENDEAVORED SUCCESSFULLY TO HAVE THE IRAQIS UNDERSTAND THE NATURE OF THE LIMITATIONS IN ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS. THIS HAS BEEN PARTICULARLY TRUE, FOR EXAMPLE, IN TERMS OF THE SIZE, MANPOWER REQUIREMENTS INVOLVED, AND TIME PERIOD FOR PROJECTS IN THE AGRICULTURE SECTOR WHICH TEND TO BECOME SO LARGE AS TO BE UNREALISTIC. HE HAS BEEN ABLE TO OBTAIN AGREEMENT TO EITHER REDUCE THE SIZE OF SPECIFIC PROJECTS OR EXTEND THE TIME IN WHICH THEY ARE TO BE COMPLETED.

F. THERE IS A NATURAL RESISTANCE ON PART OF THE HOST GOVERNMENT TO ADMITTING THAT A PROGRAM IS MARGINAL. THE AUTOMATIC REACTION IS TO JUST PUT MORE EFFORT AND MONEY INTO THE UNDERTAKING. JOURY HAS HAD ONLY LIMITED SUCCESS THUS FAR IN PHASING OUT QUESTIONABLE PROGRAMS. HIS EFFORTS NONETHELESS CONTINUE, AND HE POINTS OUT THAT ALMOST ALL SUCH PROJECTS ARE FUNDED BY THE GOI. HE ALSO ADMITS THAT THE 14 PERCENT OVERHEAD CONTRIBUTIONS MADE BY THE GOI TO PROJECTS TENDS TO ENTICE SOME OF THE UN AGENCIES INTO TAKING ON LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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QUESTIONABLE EFFORTS, AND HE IS TRYING TO COPE WITH THIS PROBLEM, WHICH HE FEELS IS NOT SERIOUS.

G. THE UNDP SUFFERS FROM ALL THE OBSTACLES NORMALLY ENCOUNTERED IN SUCH ACTIVITIES ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD. THIS IS NOT TO SAY THAT IT IS INEFFECTIVE BUT MERELY THAT IT INVOLVES PEOPLE. FOR IRAQ THE PRINCIPAL PROBLEM IS AND WILL PROBABLY CONTINUE TO BE THE AVAILABILITY OF EFFECTIVE AND CAPABLE COUNTERPART PARTICIPANTS. THE LACK OF SKILLED PEOPLE IS A PROBLEM FACING THE ENTIRE ECONOMY, AND IS THE MAIN REASON THE UNDP IS HERE.

H. THE GOI HAS TAKEN A STRONG PUBLIC STANCE IN SUPPORT OF PROVIDING AN INCREASING ROLE FOR WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT OF IRAQ. MOST MAJOR UNDP PROJECTS (HOTEL TRAINING, CIVIL AVIATION, RURAL EDUCATION, ETC.) ARE DESIGNED TO GENERATE INCREASED OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN. BOTH THE UNDP AND GOI ARE IN TOTAL AGREEMENT ON THE NECESSITY AND UTILITY OF THIS EFFORT.

2. IN SUM, TO THE EXTENT SUCH MATTERS CAN BE JUDGED FROM THE OUTSIDE, THE UNDP IN IRAQ APPEARS TO BE BOTH COST EFFECTIVE AND PRODUCTIVE. JOURY IS HELD IN HIGH REGARD BY IRAQIS AND, PARTICULARLY, THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS. USINT RECOMMENDS THE USG

TAKE A POSITION IN SUPPORT OF THE PROGRAM. I UNDERSTAND THAT
SIMILAR RECOMMENDATIONS WILL BE MADE BY AT LEAST THREE OF THE
LOCAL REPRESENTATIVES OF THE COUNTRIES ON THE GOVERNING COUNCIL.
THE OTHERS APPARENTLY HAVE NOT BEEN ASKED TO COMMENT.
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